



PS 159 • THE ISAAC PITKIN SCHOOL

PS 159

THE ISAAC PITKIN SCHOOL

PARENT & FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026–2027

“Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow”

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

2781 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208

Main Office: (718) 277-4828

Website: www.ps159k.org

Neffertiti Lee, Principal

Carla Jennings, Assistant Principal

Yvonne Ashley, Parent Coordinator



Quick Reference for Families



The information families need most often, all in one place.

Regular school hours	8:20 AM – 2:40 PM
Student is late after	8:20 AM
Hot breakfast begins	7:45 AM
Latest early pick-up	Before 2:15 PM
Half-day dismissal	11:40 AM
Main Office	(718) 277-4828
Website	www.ps159k.org
Evacuation site	PS 214 • 2944 Pitkin Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11208

STAY CONNECTED

Keep your contact information current with the Main Office. Families should also use ClassDojo, the school website, and their NYC Schools Account (NYCSA) to receive updates and view student information.



Table of Contents

Welcome to PS 159	4
Administrative Staff	4
Principal's Message	5
Parent Coordinator's Message	6
Mission & Family Engagement	7
PTA, SLT & Class Parents	8
Teaching & Learning	9
Health, Fitness & Medical Support	11
Grading Policy	12
Attendance	13
The School Day	14
Arrival, Breakfast, Lunch & Recess	15
Dismissal & Early Pick-Up	16
School Communication	17
Emergency Readiness & Discipline	18
Personal Electronic Device Policy	19
Contact Information	20



Welcome to PS 159

Administrative Staff

Role	Staff Member
Principal	Neffertiti Lee
Assistant Principal	Carla Jennings
Parent Coordinator	Yvonne Ashley
Payroll/Procurement Secretary	Andrea Bascom
Pupil Personnel Secretary	Valaria Williamson
School Counselor	Andre Lamy

IEP / Student Support Team

- Cynthia Romero — Bilingual School Psychologist
- TBD— School Psychologist
- Dannel Ellis — Social Worker
- Daniel Scolaro — Special Education Liaison



Principal's Message

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the **2026–2027 school year!** We are excited to begin another year of learning, growth, achievement, and partnership at **P.S. 159**.

At P.S. 159, we believe our school community is strongest when families, staff, students, and community members work together. This year, we will continue to strengthen those relationships while maintaining high expectations and a strong focus on rigorous instruction, foundational skills, and fostering a lifelong love of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and discovery.

Our goal is to ensure that every child feels **welcomed, supported, challenged, and inspired to reach their fullest potential**. Throughout the year, we will celebrate our students' achievements while providing the academic support, technology, enrichment opportunities, and social-emotional resources they need to thrive both inside and outside of the classroom.

Families are essential partners in this work. We encourage you to take an active role in our school community by joining the PTA, attending family workshops and school events, participating in parent-teacher conferences, and maintaining regular communication with your child's teachers. Your voice, involvement, and partnership make a meaningful difference in your child's educational experience.

We are honored to have your family as part of the P.S. 159 community and look forward to working alongside you throughout the **2026–2027 school year**. Please never hesitate to reach out when we can be of assistance. **We are here to support you and your family.**

Together, we can make this an exceptional year for every P.S. 159 student.

Sincerely,

Neffertiti Lee
Principal



Parent Coordinator's Message



Dear P.S. 159 Parents and Families,

Welcome to the **2026–2027 school year!**

As your Parent Coordinator, I am here to support some of the most important people in your child's educational journey—**you, our families!** My goal is to help build and strengthen the partnership among families, teachers, staff, and our school community so that every student has the opportunity to succeed and thrive.

I am here to serve as a resource for you throughout the school year. Whether you have questions, need assistance navigating school programs and services, are looking for academic or family resources, or simply need help connecting with the right person, please know that my door is always open.

Positive, open communication and strong relationships with our families are a priority at P.S. 159. Our motto, **"Parents as Partners,"** reflects our belief that families are an essential part of everything we do. There is no **"us" without "you."** Your voice, participation, and support help make our school community stronger.

Throughout the year, I look forward to creating opportunities for families to connect, learn, participate, and celebrate alongside us. I encourage you to attend our workshops, family events, meetings, and other activities and to stay connected with all that is happening at P.S. 159.

Let's work together to make the **2026–2027 school year** a wonderful and successful one for every child!

Warmly,

Yvonne Ashley
Parent Coordinator
P.S. 159



Mission & Family Engagement



Our Mission

Public School 159 strives to provide all children with equitable social, emotional, and academic experiences that prepare them to become lifelong learners with a strong academic foundation. Our students are tomorrow's leaders, developing the critical-thinking skills needed to meet the demands of an ever-changing global society.

Parent Engagement

P.S. 159 is fully committed to active family involvement. We believe parents and guardians are a child's first teachers and are essential partners in academic success. Family engagement includes meaningful communication about students' academic, social, physical, and emotional development, as well as opportunities to participate in the life of the school.

Visitor Policy

To maintain a safe and secure environment, all visitors must enter through the Main Entrance on Pitkin Avenue, report to the School Safety desk, present valid photo identification, and sign in. Visitors will then be directed to the Main Office for assistance.

Visitors who wish to meet with a teacher, staff member, or administrator without an appointment may be asked to wait or schedule an appointment. We will make every effort to assist families while protecting instructional time.

Parents, families, and visitors are valued members of our school community. We ask all visitors to model respectful behavior while on school premises. Individuals whose behavior is disruptive or inappropriate may be asked to leave.



Trip Chaperones

We appreciate family members who volunteer to support class trips and school activities. All trip chaperones must be at least 18 years old.

PTA, SLT & Class Parents



Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

Every parent and guardian is part of the general PTA. The PTA supports students, families, and the school community through programs, events, meetings, and volunteer opportunities. Families are encouraged to attend monthly meetings and become involved.

To learn more about PTA involvement, contact the PTA office at (718) 277-4828 ext. 1045 or dashley7@schools.nyc.gov.

School Leadership Team (SLT)

The School Leadership Team is a school-based organization made up of an equal number of parents and staff. The SLT meets monthly and supports school-based planning and shared decision-making. Mandatory members include the principal, PTA president or designated co-president, UFT chapter leader, and an equal number of parent and staff representatives.

The SLT's core responsibility is to develop the school's Comprehensive Educational Plan (CEP) in alignment with the school-based budget, solicit input from the school community, and help evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs.



SLT meetings are held on Zoom for families to attend. Minutes from previous meetings are available on the school website. All families are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Class Parents

Class parents help strengthen communication and community within each classroom. They help families stay informed about academic information, class activities, and school-wide events and serve as a liaison among classroom families, the teacher, PTA, and SLT.

Teaching & Learning



At P.S. 159, teaching and learning are rooted in rigor, relevance, and grade-level standards. Families are encouraged to contact their child's teacher and attend school workshops to learn more about units of study and instructional expectations.

Core Curricula

- Mathematics — Eureka Math (Grades K–5)
- Reading/Writing — Wit & Wisdom (Grades K–5)
- Phonics — Foundations (Grades K–2)
- Science— Amplify Science (Grades K–5)
- Social-Emotional Learning — Sanford Harmony

English Language Arts Expectations

- Students engage daily in rigorous reading and writing tasks designed to strengthen foundational literacy skills and build a love of reading and writing.



- Students should read independently for at least 20 minutes each day. Your child's teacher can help you select appropriately challenging reading material.
- Families are encouraged to read with children for 15–30 minutes each night and discuss the text using details and evidence.
- Literacy instruction incorporates social studies content and culturally responsive-sustaining education topics and skills.

Mathematics Expectations

- Students develop a deeper understanding of the “why” behind mathematics through comprehensive problem-solving and computational instruction.
- Families can reinforce basic math facts through flash cards, multiplication practice, computation, and real-world problems such as calculating prices or measuring ingredients while cooking.

Science Expectations

- Amplify Science combines hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools.
- Students are encouraged to think, read, write, and communicate like scientists and engineers.
- Families can support learning through safe, age-appropriate at-home investigations and conversations about science.



Health, Fitness & Medical Support

P.S. 159 is committed to student health, fitness, and wellness. Physical activity and movement are incorporated into the school experience through:

- Physical Education
- Outdoor recess
- Music and movement
- Social-emotional learning

If Your Child Needs Medical Attention

If a child becomes ill at school, the school nurse will attend to the child and contact a parent or guardian. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the nurse will contact other adults listed on the child's Blue Emergency Card.

The nurse may assist with medically documented medication when the required health documentation has been processed and approved. Families should contact the school nurse for guidance regarding required forms and procedures.

In a health emergency, if no authorized adult can be reached, 911 will be called when necessary to protect the child's safety.



Grading Policy

The P.S. 159 marking system is aligned with applicable Chancellor's standards and the school's uniform grading policy.

Category	Weight
Projects	20%
Assessments (formative and summative)	25%
Homework	15%
Portfolios / Classwork	25%
Class Participation	15%
Performance Level	Percentage
4 — Exceeds Grade-Level Standards	90% and above
3 — Meets Grade-Level Standards	80–89%
2 — Approaching Grade-Level Standards	65-79%
1 — Far Below Grade-Level Standards	0-64%

Promotion decisions consider whether students have mastered sufficient content and skills to be successful in the next grade. Families of students performing below standards are encouraged to work closely with school staff to develop appropriate supports.



Attendance



Daily attendance and punctuality are essential to student learning. Each missed day results in lost instructional time and can make it more difficult for students to remain on pace with grade-level learning.

- When your child is absent, send a written note when the child returns. Include the date of absence, child's name and class, teacher's name, and reason for the absence.
- For an extended illness or an absence of three or more days, contact the school to explain the reason and expected duration.
- Students are responsible for completing work missed during an absence.
- Planned family vacations during the school year are strongly discouraged.
- If you know in advance that your child will be absent, notify the classroom teacher as early as possible.
- For absences longer than two days, contact the school and speak with the appropriate attendance or family-support staff so the absence can be documented accurately.



The School Day

REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS
8:20 AM – 2:40 PM

Period	Time
Period 1	8:20 AM – 9:05 AM
Period 2	9:05 AM – 9:50 AM
Period 3	9:50 AM – 10:35 AM
Period 4	10:35 AM – 11:25 AM
Period 5	11:25 AM – 12:15 PM
Period 6	12:15 PM – 1:05 PM
Period 7	1:05 PM – 1:55 PM
Period 8	1:55 PM – 2:40 PM
Dismissal	2:40 PM



Arrival, Breakfast, Lunch & Recess



Arrival

The school day begins promptly at 8:20 AM. Students arriving after 8:20 AM will be marked late. To support safety and consistency, grades are assigned specific entry doors. Staff members are stationed at arrival locations to welcome students and support breakfast distribution.

Breakfast Program

Breakfast and lunch are free for all students. A hot breakfast is available beginning at 7:45 AM. Families should follow the school's current arrival procedures for breakfast and grade-level entry.

Lunch and Recess

Students may eat a school-provided lunch or bring a packed lunch from home.

Packed Lunch

- Do not send glass containers, sharp implements, or other items that could cause injury.
- Use containers that your child can open independently.
- Label lunch boxes and containers with your child's name and class.
- If your child has a severe food allergy, inform the classroom teacher and school administration.
- If a child does not have a packed lunch, a school lunch will be provided.
- **Please do not bring lunch to the school after the school day begins; staff cannot deliver lunches to individual students.**



Dismissal & Early Pick-Up



Regular Dismissal

- Students are dismissed from the same designated exit/location each day unless families are notified of a change.
- Parents and guardians should pick up children from their designated locations.
- Parents may not enter through the Main Entrance at dismissal unless they have a pre-scheduled appointment.
- Please make every effort to arrive on time. Late pick-up procedures will be communicated by the school.
- Adults picking up students must present valid photo identification when requested and must be authorized to pick up the child.

Early Pick-Up

If an authorized adult listed on your child's Blue Card will pick up your child early, please notify the teacher in advance whenever possible. Students will not be released to an adult who is not listed on the Blue Card. The authorized adult must sign the student out in the Main Office.

Early pick-up must occur before 2:15 PM. **Students will not be released after 2:15 PM because doing so disrupts school-wide dismissal procedures.**

Half-Day / Early Dismissal

On scheduled half days, students are dismissed at 11:40 AM. Because traffic patterns may differ on these days, families are encouraged to arrive 5–10 minutes early.



School Communication: Staying Connected

P.S. 159 wants families to remain informed, involved, and engaged. Please keep your telephone number, email address, emergency contacts, and other contact information current with the Main Office.

- School website: www.ps159k.org
- ClassDojo
- Notes and direct communication with teachers
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- NYC Schools Account (NYCSA)

NYC Schools Account (NYCSA)

NYCSA provides families access to important student information such as attendance, report cards, general student information, and test scores. Families who need assistance creating or accessing an account should contact the Parent Coordinator.

To create or access an account, families will generally need internet access, an email address, and the student's identification information. The Parent Coordinator can assist with account creation codes and access questions.



Emergency Readiness & Student Expectations



General Response Protocol

- Staff and students are trained and participate in drills for emergency procedures such as evacuation, shelter-in, and lockdown.
- Training is tailored to student age and grade level.
- Families receive information about the General Response Protocol so they can discuss emergency readiness at home.

Evacuation Site

If the school must evacuate, families will receive updates using the contact information on file. Please keep all emergency contact information current.

PRIMARY EVACUATION SITE

PS 214 • 2944 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208

Discipline Code

P.S. 159 is committed to safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environments. We use preventive and restorative approaches, reinforce positive behavior, and use teachable moments to address conflict. Families are encouraged to review the current NYCPS Citywide Behavioral Expectations to Support Student Learning and discuss school expectations with their children.



Personal Electronic Device Policy

To minimize distractions, support student safety and focus, and comply with applicable New York State and NYCPS requirements, students may not use or access personal internet-enabled electronic devices during the school day except when an approved exception applies.

Internet-enabled electronic devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones and smartphones, smartwatches, tablets, iPads, laptops, and portable entertainment or music devices.

Collection and Storage

1. Upon arrival, students must power off their personal devices.
2. Students will place devices in a school-provided pouch and secure the pouch in front of school staff.
3. Locked pouches will remain with the teacher for the duration of the school day.
4. At dismissal, students will unlock the pouch and remove their device.
5. Pouches will be returned to the designated secured classroom storage area overnight.
6. Students with approved early dismissal may unlock their pouch in the classroom, in front of the teacher, before leaving.

Emergency Communication

In an emergency or exigent circumstance, parents and guardians may call the Main Office at (718) 277-4828 to reach their child. The school may use ClassDojo and/or NYCPS messaging systems to communicate important information to families.

Exceptions

- An IEP or 504 Plan requires use of an internet-enabled device and an appropriate NYCPS-issued device is not available.
- A device is required for documented medical monitoring or treatment.
- A student has an approved caregiving need.
- A device is needed for approved language access when another appropriate means is unavailable.
- Use is otherwise required by law.

Requests for exceptions should be shared with the child's teacher. The principal or designee will review the request and notify relevant parties. Exceptions will be reviewed as needed throughout the school year.



Discipline

Violations of the school's personal electronic device policy are subject to progressive discipline consistent with applicable NYCPS policy and law. A student may not be suspended solely for accessing a personal internet-enabled device in violation of the school policy. Repeated refusal to comply with lawful directions regarding device storage may result in additional disciplinary responses consistent with NYCPS requirements.

Lost or Damaged Devices / Pouches

The school will provide a replacement for an initially lost or damaged school-issued storage pouch. Additional lost or damaged pouches may be subject to a nominal replacement fee, consistent with school policy. Information regarding claims for personal electronic devices lost or damaged at school may be available through the appropriate City process.



Contact Information



P.S. 159 — THE ISAAC PITKIN SCHOOL
2781 Pitkin Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11208
Main Office: (718) 277-4828
Website: www.ps159k.org
Regular School Hours: 8:20 AM – 2:40 PM

P.S. 159 is a welcoming community. Our staff is here to help families connect with the person who can best address questions, concerns, and needs.

For classroom or academic concerns, families should begin by contacting the child's teacher. If additional support is needed, the teacher or Main Office can connect the family with another staff member.

To speak with a teacher outside of a scheduled conference or meeting time, call the Main Office at (718) 277-4828. Meetings with administrators may require an appointment, particularly when a family wishes to speak with a specific administrator.

This handbook is intended to support coordination and communication among families, students, and school personnel. It is not all-inclusive. As NYCPS or school policies and regulations are updated, P.S. 159 will communicate those changes to families.

Thank you for partnering with us.
Learners Today, Leaders Tomorrow.